

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 SS-20 NSC-07 OMB-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /129 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4745

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS USNATO 1568

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: UK DEFENSE POLICY

1. MISSION HAS RECEIVED COPY OF LETTER SENT TO SECRETARY GENERAL
BY AMBASSADOR PECK (UK) CONCERNING UK DEFENSE POLICY, QUOTE
BELOW:

BEGIN TEXT

UK DEFENCE POLICY

1. I THINK IT WILL BE OF INTEREST TO YOU AND OUR COLLEAGUES
TO KNOW THE TERMS OF THE WRITTEN REPLY TO A PARLIAMENTARY
QUESTION, GIVEN THIS AFTERNOON BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
DEFENCE. THE TEXT OF THE REPLY IS AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: IN THE QUENN'S SPEECH THE GOVERNMENT UNDERTOOK TO
PURSUE IN CONSULTATION WITH THEIR ALLIES "A POLICY
DIRECTED TO MAINTAINING A MODERN AND EFFECTIVE DEFENCE
SYSTEM WHILE REDUCING ITS COST AS A PROPORTION OF OUR
NATIONAL RESOURCES". TO THIS END, I HAVE INITIATED A
REVIEW OF CURRENT DEFENCE COMMITMENTS AND CAPABILITIES
AGAINST THE RESOURCES THAT, GIVEN THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS
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OF THE COUNTRY, WE CAN AFFORD TO DEVOTE TO DEFENCE. NATO
IS THE LINCH-PIN OF OUR SECURITY AND WILL REMAIN THE
FIRST CHARGE ON THE RESOURCES MADE AVAILABLE FOR DEFENCE:
BUT WE CONSIDER THAT THE BURDEN WHICH WE BEAR IN SUPPORT

OF THE COMMON NATO INTEREST SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO LINE WITH THAT OF OUR MAJOR EUROPEAN ALLIES. OUTSIDE EUROPE WE SHALL EXAMINE THE CONTRIBUTION MADE IN EACH CASE BY OUR MILITARY PRESENCE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND STABILITY, RECALLING THE DECISION TAKEN BY HMG IN 1968 THAT OUR FORCES SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN FROM SOUTH EAST ASIA. THERE WILL BE FULL CONSULTATION WITH OUR ALLIES WHEREVER THEIR INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED. OUR INTENTION IS TO COMPLETE THE REVIEW LATER IN THE YEAR. UNQUOTE.

2. YOU WILL, I AM SURE, BE PLEASED TO SEE THE EMPHASIS WHICH THIS ANSWER PLACES ON NATO AND ON FULL CONSULTATION WITH OUR ALLIES. I SHOULD ALSO ADD THAT NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN WHICH PREJUDGE THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW.

3. I AM SENDING A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO OUR COLLEAGUES IN THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE AND ALSO TO THE FRENCH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE.

END TEXT.

2. AMBASSADOR PECK READ THE TEXT OF THE REPLY IN A SPECIAL DPC CONVENED SUBSEQUENT TO THE HILEX DPC THIS AFTERNOON, MARCH 21. THE STATEMENT EVOKED NO COMMENT FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OTHER NATIONS.
RUMSFELD

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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